

ISLAND MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES

10.21.20

Meeting Location: 6339 Carolina Beach Rd., Wilmington, NC 28412 and virtually, via Zoom
Time: 7:00PM

In attendance, onsite: Eric, Melinda, Michael, Kari, and Renae
In attendance, via Zoom: Melissa, Dan, Molly, Jill, Michael
Staff in attendance, onsite: Alicia
Staff in attendance, via Zoom: Brian, Carrie, Lara, Blair, Judy
Absent: None

Guests: Dana Eder, Christina Dees, Gigi Lawless, Melanie Hodge, Janie McAuliffe, Jennifer Garrabrant, and Lori Oldham

Alicia announced that this meeting would be recorded and archived. She emphasized that it is a public meeting and if anyone would like to view the video archive, they may request it from the front office. Eric motioned to open the meeting, seconded by Melinda. The motion to open the meeting was unanimously approved by the board. The Island Montessori Charter School board meeting was called to order at 7:00PM, by Eric.

2 Minute Visitor Comments:

Dana Eder: Ms. Eder thanked the board for the opportunity to share. She expressed an interest in plans for MS students to return for in person instruction. She shared that her MS student is bored, staring at a computer for long periods of time.

Melanie Hodge: No comment.

Janie McAuliffe: Ms. McAuliffe is a kindergarten parent. She is concerned about unmasked Pre-K students potentially exposing the kindergarten students, as Pre-K doesn't require mask usage but kindergarten does. She questions why there are different sets of guidelines. She stated that research she has done supports younger children using masks. Ms. McAuliffe commended the CS for both their cleaning regimen and screening protocols, but emphasized the need for the Pre-K students to wear masks. She urged the board to consider a mask requirement for all CS students, including Pre-K.

Jennifer Stancil: Ms. Stancil shared that her child, a seventh grader, is struggling with remote learning. She is curious if any other options would be provided.

Jennifer Garrabrant: No comment, but thanked everyone.

Jessica Anderson: Ms. Anderson is concerned about MS returning for face to face instruction.

Gigi Lawless: Ms. Lawless struggled with her audio connection. Via the Zoom chat option, she shared that she was eager to hear plans regarding MS.

Lori Oldham: Ms. Oldham expressed concern that the MS students are still in remote learning. She stated that her student is not flourishing in a remote learning environment. Ms. Oldham would like to see her child return to school soon.

FSA Liaison (Melissa):

Spirit Week is next week. New spirit wear has arrived.

Eric read the mission statement.

IMS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Island Montessori Charter School is to enable children of diverse backgrounds to learn and grow at their own pace by offering a developmentally appropriate and challenging academic Montessori environment that models grace and courtesy and fosters a peaceful community of lifelong learners.

Meeting Agenda:

Melinda motioned to approve the meeting agenda, seconded by Kari. The motion to approve the meeting agenda was unanimously approved by the board.

Previous Minutes:

Dan made a motion to table the September 16th and October 1st minutes. It was seconded by Jill. The motion to table the September 16th and October 1st minutes, was unanimously approved by the board.

Board Recognition:

Eric recognized Alicia for all her hard work in reopening.

Communications Director Update (Blair):

Blair reports that she has been focusing on the Children's School, in order to boost enrollment. She shared that she is working on an ad campaign with WECT. Blair is sharing photos of families who are helping out in preparing the campus for returning students and also of remote learning on the school social media. Spirit Week is next week. Take out Tuesday will be at Islands. Blair suggested that the board consider refreshing and simplifying the website. She requested that images of Sunday's work session be sent to her, as she will be out of town.

Academic Update (Lara):

Lara reported that planning out through December is occurring, looking especially at what resources might be needed. Lara shared that work is being banked for multiple environments.

HOS Report (Alicia):

Grade Level Active Enrollment

Kindergarten: 26, 1st Grade: 25, 2nd Grade: 24, 3rd Grade: 25, 4th Grade: 23, 5th Grade: 25, 6th Grade: 22, 7th Grade: 23, 8th Grade: 21, Total: 214

Student Discipline Report

Alicia shared that there was a need to tighten up internet security, specifically Google Chat.

Updates on Goals/Issues for Discussion

1. Academic Achievement

Goals for 2020/2021

1. *Increase growth for all students with differentiated instruction in Montessori Lessons driven by data/observations*
2. *Provide meaningful learning opportunities for all students during remote learning times*
3. *Strengthen all aspects of math especially at the Upper Elementary*
4. *Strengthen all aspects of reading at K-3 level.*
5. *Improve MTSS*
6. *Teach **perspective** in all learning opportunities as part of mindfulness*

Data for Reporting/Discussion

2. Mission Based Program and School Improvement Initiatives Updates

- Year of Perspective—staff had a PD lesson with Brian on perspective.
- Academic Committee is shifting focus from reopening preparations to full school needs. Meetings are returning to once a month and will be working around needs of the school and future focus for Environmental Education.
- Parent information sessions have begun. There are two more next week and a recording will be sent out after. There has been a good number of parents that have shown up for the meetings.

3. Facility Update

- Wishlist items are being purchased to work on outdoor learning environments.
- A SignUpGenius is going out to families to help with outdoor areas that need some sprucing up and also for a large work day.
- Grass areas are being maintained on a bi-weekly basis.

- Chicken coop is being taken down by the lawn maintenance crew. Middle School will be taking on the project of rebuilding and restructuring the farm area.

4. Compliance Reporting

- Audit is still in progress. Complete on our end - waiting on more from the auditor.

5. Professional Development

- Staff participated in a PD around social distance games to play with their students.
- Children's School, LE, and UE teachers are participating in an online training through Montessori 4 Inclusion on the topic of Orton Gillingham Approach in the Montessori Environment - supporting students with learning differences.

Financial Report (Treasurer's Report – Kari):

- Bank Accounts:
 - United Account:\$382,358
 - Live Oak account: \$251,126
 - NBKC account: \$250,065 (*Note: account was initially set up as a checking account and so did not accrue interest in the first four months as planned. This has been corrected.)
- Projected Margin: \$34k
- Identified Potential Short/Long Term Issues:
 - Potential for state to revert money

Strategic Plan update – State Plan:

No update.

Board Strategic Plan:

No update.

Special Board Projects:

No update.

Executive Committee (EX):

No update.

Grant Committee:

Melissa reported that we were awarded \$1,250 from International Paper to support remote learning. One grant for \$7,500 is pending (Landfall). Brian shared that a contractor was scheduled to visit in November to begin fitting the school with solar panels as part of the NC GreenPower award we received in the spring.

Finance Committee:

Brian provided a PPP loan update, sharing that as of right now, loans of \$50,000 or less would be the only ones forgiven. Brian was advised by the bank to check back next week. Dan inquired about the terms of the loan. Brian stated that it was 1% in three years. Michael offered his opinion regarding the probability of forgiveness.

IT:

No update.

EC:

No update.

Nutrition/Lunch Program:

No update.

After School Specials:

No update.

Outdoor Committee:

Work day planned for Sunday, November 1st.

HR/Policies and Procedures:

A discussion took place regarding what we are doing to advance our goal to increase diversity in hiring. Brian made plans to connect with Molly to discuss this initiative further.

Marketing:

No update.

Diversity Update:

No update.

Alumni Committee:

No update.

OLD BUSINESS/NEW BUSINESS:

Old Business:

- Reopening: Alicia stated that three separate calendars have been generated and sent out to our three separate cohorts. A discussion regarding MS returning for face to face instruction occurred. Alicia shared that a large concern for MS is licensure, as our dedicated remote teachers are not licensed for MS. She shared that Steve and Kerri are more comfortable with remote learning, but will be amenable to what the board decides, as long as they are given time to prepare for reopening. Jill shared her thoughts on MS reopening. Eric shared that he would like the board to focus on the date for MS return and asked that Alicia send out a survey to MS families, as soon as possible. He stated that he would like to see a November return for MS and that he was not comfortable being the only school not open. Renae feels that MS has room to be creative and advises proceeding accordingly. Dan expressed interest in Jill's reopening thoughts. He also shared that he does not feel MS will be ready to reopen by early November. He mentioned that he has spoken with several MS families and understands their concerns. Brian recommends sending ideas to Alicia and Lara. Dan expressed a preference to discuss options now. Alicia reviewed the template of the decision process for UE/LE in case we wished to follow that. She highlighted that MS students would only see their teachers one day a week in the Aa/Bb schedule. She discussed a one week on, one week off schedule. Molly thanked Alicia and questioned the value of an Aa/Bb schedule for MS. Jill expressed confusion as to why we could not go outside the box to brainstorm for MS. Alicia advised proceeding with caution, citing staffing concerns. Lara stressed the importance of instructional planning time for the teachers and quality instruction for the students. Alicia expressed concern regarding staffing. Renee suggested a phased approach and a staggered drop off and pick up schedule. She also expressed support for the Wednesday outdoor workdays. Alicia will host a MS parent info night soon. Melinda emphasized the need to survey the parents. Eric made a motion to return MS students for face to face instruction on November 30th, with Wednesday optional outdoor workdays, beginning November 4th. Melinda seconded the motion. The motion to return MS students to face to face instruction on November 30th, with Wednesday optional outdoor workdays, beginning November 4th was approved by all board members, with the exception of Melissa, who is opposed to face to face instruction at this time. Molly feels that we need survey results. She asked Alicia if the November 30th return date allowed for enough time for the teachers to prepare for return. Alicia replied favorably to the time frame and added that she feels that the Wednesdays outdoor work days are manageable as well, as they are the least populated on campus. Jill inquired about the possibility of EC students returning for face to face instruction. Alicia replied that they will be returning four days a week. We will address transition students (first and fourth) returning for four days at the November meeting.
- Brian expressed a need for approximately \$8,000 for skirting at the CS and to repair the floor in the kitchen. Dan inquired as to why we are initiating these projects right now. Brian responded that he feels good about the state not asking for a return of funds and hurricane season coming to a close. Dan stated that it is not the time for cosmetic touch ups. Brian feels that for recruitment purposes, we need to maintain the facilities.

New Business:

- Alicia highlighted the "Real Time Communication Timeline", which is found on the school website. She is aware that some SchoolCues are going to spam and is utilizing this timeline to aid with communication.
- Melinda made a motion to approve two new hires, a guidance counselor and an EC instructor for MS. Eric seconded the motion. The motion to approve two new hires, a guidance counselor and an EC instructor for MS, was approved by the entire board, with the exception of Dan. He abstained, citing that the board was not given ample time to consider the resumes.
- Eric emphasized the upcoming work day and requested that board members make an effort to attend.

Eric motioned to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Melinda. The board unanimously approved to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 8:34PM.

REMINDERS:

- Next board meeting is Wednesday, November 18th, 2020, at 7:00PM, via Zoom, with an in person option.
- All committee reports are due by Friday, November 13th, 2020 [PDF Format Please!].
- Next Executive Committee meeting is Thursday, November 12th, at 10:00AM, via Zoom.

Upcoming Events:

- November 2nd - First day of Cohort A face to face
- November 1st - Work Day
- November 30th - December 4th the school will be open for instruction - no longer required as remote learning days

ACTION STEP ITEMS:

- Brian and Molly to pursue diversity in hiring initiative
- Blair to update website
- Alicia to send out MS survey
- Lottery planning to begin